2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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South Carolina

Sherman's famous Special Field Order No. 15 set aside for the former slaves "the islands from Charleston south [and] the abandoned rice fields along the rivers for thirty miles back from the sea." Within weeks black homesteaders were happily farming their own plots on Edisto, Wadmalaw, Johns, and James islands. By September, President Andrew Johnson had nullified Sherman's order. Many freedmen were dispossessed, but others tenaciously held on to their lands and passed them on to their descendants. Some even managed to buy more land at the end of the nineteenth century as whites again abandoned the islands after years of feeble cotton prices and a series of killer hurricanes. For the first half of the twentieth century blacks continued to be in the majority on the Sea Islands, and land values continued to be low.

For generations the Sea Islanders lived under the same hot sun, surrounded by the same sea and salt marsh, forming a barrier that isolated them from the mainland. For generations fishermen flung their nets into creeks and marshes and ocean for crabs, shrimp, and fish; and they gathered oysters and clams. These supplied both local markets and their own kitchens. For generations islanders cultivated their own little plots of land. Farmers hoed the loamy soil of the islands to produce crops of beans, peas, and cotton. First there was the planting, then the weeding, then the reaping. In the winter women sewed clothes and made quilts; the men looked for work ashore. In the spring they started the cycle over from the beginning—the planting, the weeding, the reaping.

The years passed: the young grew old and the old died. And the planting, seeding, and reaping, and the fishing, shrimping, and crabbing went on. And each spring the cycle started over again. Each year was like the year before. Each generation was like the generation before. For generations there were the same prayers and the same hopes, the same faith and the same fear, the same work and the same result. For generations there was the same old, hard legacy of slavery that robbed men and women of their honor, a legacy visited upon the children and the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren, a legacy against which honest hard work seemed useless, a legacy so old it took its place among natural phenomena like the wind and the rain.

It was not an easy life; but it was a self-sufficient life adapted to the environment, a life shaped by a rich folk culture. Cut off from the mainland, generations of Sea Islanders preserved their cultural heritage, reflecting both continuity with Africa and creativity in the New World.

3: Creel H-4 (no date) 1988
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doctrine. When given the opportunity, they fashioned their own religion. For instance, slaves in the wealthy coastal parish on the Waccamaw peninsula had the atypical experience of receiving, from about 1835 to 1861, very concerted Christian instruction. The rector of All Saints Episcopal Church at Waccamaw was Alexander Glennie of England, who, with several assistants, spent thirty-three years preaching and teaching bondspeople on numerous plantations. Glennie's parish and church were showplaces of the Carolina Coast whenever planters and Southern clergymen wanted to demonstrate how fully they were meeting the spiritual needs of their "people." Glennie himself published a popular book of sermons designed especially for slaves. Hundreds of Gullahs were communicants at All Saints, and "thousands of colored children recited the catechism, intelligently." Observers were impressed with Glennie's effectiveness:

> He has been with them so long and is such an amiable kind man that the negroes love him very much and his example has as much influence over them as his preaching. We all went to the negro church one P.M. . . . the congregation responsed and sang the Te Deum with Mr. G. . . . . When he preached he would go on a while, then stop and ask them questions about what he had gone over and they answered very well.

Yet after the Civil War, returning residents witnessed what they termed "religious deterioration" among the former slaves:

> Chapels were taken over by the negroes and soon resounded with barbaric shouting, the accompaniment of the debased Christianity of the emancipated slave. . . . They have forsaken the way which they had learned, and taken to themselves teachers of their own color. Fanaticism and extravagance rule in their assemblies. . . . There are indications of a return to African barbarism.[2]

During the Yankee occupation, representatives of the American Missionary Association noted that Gullahs were a "religious people," easily inspired to sing and pray profusely. Jesus was "a common theme in their conversation." But observers also noted that Gullahs knew little of "practical religion." Northern teachers commented on how quickly Gullah children memorized their school lessons. Yet the children's knowledge of religion was strangely confused with the current events in which they were caught up. One teacher, after "plainly" explaining to a Sunday School class of large boys the origin of the Ten Commandments and

6: Smith I,Y-5 (no date) 1989
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

771 (114) Crum[22] claimed that the Gullah people have no interest in the future. This researcher found the case to be the opposite. The Gullahs, the elders in particular, are constantly looking ahead to the day on which their life patterns will be judged fitting to "keep eternal company in the Great Kingdom." Their life paths and worldly efforts are aimed at nothing else than at the day when their deeds will be reviewed. It is with the religious context, that the discipline behaviors of the Gullah people must be understood. Malicious acts of child abuse, and the heavy handed parent are frowned upon. Discipline acts for the Gullah, are aimed primarily at keeping the child "on d steppn of d Lord," meaning that the purpose of much of the discipline behavior is to prepare the child for demands of living the religious existence. Dr. Spock's notions of child rearing have no relevance in the Gullah household. Here the teachings contained in the Bible are the guide posts the parent follows. Discipline manifested as physical punishment appear to be no more frequent than the verbal

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[22]Crum, op. cit.

771 861 •182 means of socialization. The sternness of the religious behaviors of the Gullah people are metered down into their discipline behavior. Among these people the 99.9% effort toward adherence to religious commandments as in child rearing just is not good enough. The only acceptable effort is all the way. This often reached quest for total committment in religious activities is the basis upon which the obedience of children are judged. This must be constantly in mind when interpreting the discipline behaviors of Gullah parents.

861 (867) Gullah parents are constant observers of the behavior of children. The boundaries around what constitutes asocial behavior are clearly understood and learned early. The child in turn knows full well what behaviors will elicit which response by the parent. In accord with the religious teachings, the parent will not hesitate to punish disobedient behavior. Punishment though is not always or most frequently manifested in its physical form, but rather the form of discipline used will depend on any number of factors in the environment. The prime determinant being the overall behavior of the child. Gullah parents emphasized to this researcher that discipline must be tendened with mercy. "Billie ya ca'n trash dem all d timb, ya gotta scol some an beat some." They felt total reliance on physical discipline in disregard to the overall behaviors and